NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

History & Humanities

~ StandFor Projects **Teacher Notes**

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StandFor

#EXPLORING THE TOPIC

1 "History is written by the winners." This sentence has been repeated by many people over the years. Nevertheless, when it comes to Napoleon Bonaparte, that not may be the case. His story encompasses both victories and failures and yet he has become one of the greatest characters in history. Based on your knowledge of Napoleon's story, match up the following words and pictures.

Organize students in small groups and ask them to read and complete **Activity 1**. Correct it orally. Next, ask them to complete the sentences in **Activity 2**. After correcting it, ask the groups to close the infographic. Challenge them to write a short text on Napoleon, based only on the information they have just read. Afterward, ask them to compare texts. Do they remember the same pieces of information?

a)
Georgios Kollidas/Shutterstock.com

b)
Everett - Art/Shutterstock.com

c)
Everett - Art/Shutterstock.com

d)
Baron François Gérard, 1807-08, Musée national du Château de Fontainebleau, France

e)
Lisa Strachan/Shutterstock.com

- Josephine de Beauharnais
- General
- island of Saint Helena
- military campaign
- Emperor

K-W-L chart

2 **Now, use the words above to complete the following sentences on Napoleon Bonaparte.**

Napoleon Bonaparte was born in Corsica, in 1769.
He became a _____General_____ at the early age of 24.
At the age of 26 he began his first _____military campaign_____ against Austria and Italy.
He met _____Josephine de Beauharnais_____ in 1795, during a ball, and fell in love with her right away.
Napoleon became the _____Emperor_____ of France in 1804.
Napoleon was exiled to the _____island of Saint Helena_____, where he died at the age of 52.

I *know* about this topic
I *want* to know
I *learned*

Napoleon Bonaparte

One of the biggest names in modern history. His personality is so contradictory that he can be defined both as a "democratic tyrant" and a "republican emperor." Napoleon was, without a doubt, one of the greatest military geniuses in history and a key figure who marked the beginning of the 19th century and the resulting developments of contemporary Europe.

NAPOLEON, EMPEROR OF FRANCE

His military genius shone throughout his empire.

The three main principles of Napoleon's strategic military approach were his army's **power**, **safety** and **economy**. These principles were materialized in the military undertakings and tactics that could guarantee victories without wasting energy on distracting maneuvers.

By 1805 Napoleon had won several battles. In 1810 these victories took him to the apex of his power: complete domain over annexed continental states. His efforts to maintain control over these areas were huge and nothing could resist his army and leadership.

THE NAPOLEONIC CODE

The Code also contains principles of Roman Law and norms common to the Ancien Regime.

The Civil Code, or Napoleonic Code, was Napoleon's most lasting achievement work. Although the wording was highly eclectic, it listed the bases of the French Revolution:

- principles of equality and liberty for all citizens;
- abolition of feudalism;
- free access to ownership; and
- understanding individualism as the basis of any legal right.

TIMELINE

1769 — *Napoleon was born on August 15, in Ajaccio, Corsica.*

1779 — *At the age of 10, he travels to France to attend the military school in Brienne-le-Château.*

1785 — *He is accepted at the Royal Military School in Paris and receives the rank of Artillery Lieutenant.*

1789 — *The French Revolution breaks out with the storming of the Bastille prison. Napoleon takes part in the insurrection in Corsica.*

1792 — *France declares war on Austria.*

1793 — *King Louis XVI is executed. The Reign of Terror begins.*

1794 — *Napoleon is commissioned Brigadier General for his leadership and achievements during the siege of Toulon (1793).*

1795 — *He saves the National Convention (French Revolutionary Republican Government) from a popular insurrection in Paris.*

1796 — *As General-in-chief of the French Army in Italy, Napoleon leads his army to several victories. He marries Josephine de Beauharnais.*

1798/99 — *Military campaigns in Italy and Egypt.*

1799 — *Napoleon fails to conquer Syria and returns to France, where he gains control through a coup d'état. He is appointed First Consul and holds dictatorial powers as the main ruler in France.*

1800 — *He wins the Battle of Marengo against Austria. Napoleon also takes full control of the north of Italy. A new constitution is adopted in France.*

1801 — *The separation of church and state is set by a treaty with the Catholic church.*

1802 — *Napoleon is declared lifelong Consul of the French Republic.*

1804 — *He declares himself Emperor of France, at Notre Dame Cathedral.*

1805 — *Napoleon becomes King of Italy. He wins the Battle of Austerlitz against Russia and Austria.*

1806 — *He defeats Prussia in Jena and sets up the confederation of the Rhine to take control over Poland. He also creates the Continental System with the sole intention of destroying British commerce.*

1807 — *Napoleon invades Portugal and takes part in the Battles of Friedland and Eylau. He signs the Peace Treaty of Tilsit.*

1808 — *He invades Spain. His brother Jose is declared King. Portugal and Spain would struggle for freedom for the following six years.*

1809 — *The Fifth Coalition against Napoleon is formed. Napoleon defeats this coaliton in Wagram and annexes the Papal States. He annuls his marriage to Josephine.*

1810 — *He marries Marie Louise, Archduchess of Austria and daughter of Emperor Frances II of Austria.*

1811 — *His son, Napoleon II, is born. Napoleon grants him the title of King of Rome.*

1812/13 — *The Russian Campaign begins. Napoleon is defeated in Leipzig. Spain is finally free.*

1814 — *He abdicates the throne and is exiled to Elba.*

1815 — *Napoleon escapes from Elba to France and takes over power. He governs France for hundred days and is defeated at the Battle of Waterloo.*

1821 — *He dies while imprisoned on Saint Helena, an island in the southern Atlantic Ocean.*

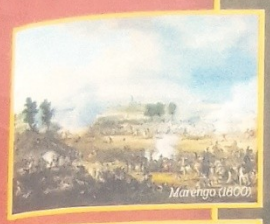
Napoleon's tomb in Paris

A LEGEND IS BORN

The myth of Napoleon is defined by his victories at:

Marengo (1800)
Austerlitz (1805)
Jeno (1806)
Friedland (1807)
Wagram (1809)

His endless ambition, great charisma, military skills, and revolutionary appeal led him to glory.


Marengo (1800)

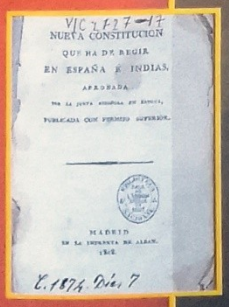
Friedland (1807)

THE CULT OF HIS PERSONALITY

Napoleon's main ambition was to build up enormous personal power, which he saw as his destiny. As a result, he encouraged a personality cult by commissioning hagiographic works of art, publicizing his military victories, and by forging his image as the orchestrator of France's glory.

A LIFE OF BRAVERY

Napoleon is often compared to Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar for many reasons, but mostly due to his military achievements at a very young age. He became a General at the age of twenty-five (during the Siege of Toulon). Napoleon had a revolutionary mindset and his popularity was built up through wars against European monarchies.


NUEVA CONSTITUCION
QUE HA DE REGIR
EN ESPAÑA E INDIAS.
MADRID

INTERVENTION IN AMERICA

Napoleon had a major influence on Latin America's political history. His control over Spain, the removal of Charles IV and Ferdinand VII, the offering of the Spanish throne to this brother Jose and the recognition of the autonomy of American colonies paved the way for independence movements in Spanish America, while his invasion of Portugal forced the Portuguese Royal Family to move to Brazil in 1808.

Josephine de Beauharnais

HIS WIVES

Napoleon understood the concept of marriage in a very practical manner. He gave his love life over to state issues. Even though he was deeply in love with Josephine de Beauharnais, he divorced her in 1810 because she was not able to provide him with an heir. The Emperor later married Marie Louise of the house of Hapsburg, thereby securing an heir and joining one of the oldest European monarchies.

HIS DOWNFALL

His exile to Elba and imprisonment on Saint Helena put an end to his enormous popularity. His triumphant image, portrayed by his official artists, began to be satirized by his critics. But, with the publication of his memoirs, his popularity reached the next generation.

#GUIDED READING

Napoleon Bonaparte

6 Iconography

Napoleon used iconography to build up his public image in a very sophisticated manner. These works of art are important historical sources that help us better understand his personality and actions.

- What kind of image did Napoleon try to build?

6. The works of art displayed in the infographic are an important historical source that help people better understand Napoleon's personality and actions. The iconographic details may be explained by their symbolic value in order to show students the use of these elements as a form of propaganda.

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5 Colors

Pay attention to the color contrast applied in the two areas of the infographic. In one area, Napoleon's achievements are presented, and in the other, his personality traits are addressed.

4 Additional information

The right-hand side of the infographic has information that expands the facts listed in the timeline. In the center of the page, two text boxes explain Napoleon's political and military mindset.

4. The two boxes in the center of the infographic expand the descriptions of France's social and political background at the time. Try to make students aware of this connection.

#POST READING

Ask students to work on this activity individually. Tell them to note the features of a timeline by checking the one in the infographic. Explain that a timeline lists the date (year, month or day) of an event and has a short statement on the events of that date. While correcting the activity, ask students to explain their choices.

1 You have been asked to make a timeline listing four of the main facts from Napoleon's life. Choose his life events carefully, list the dates, and state each fact using just a single sentence. Make sure your timeline is clear.

Marie-Josèphe-Rose Tascher de La Pagerie, also known as Josephine de Beauharnais, had a very important role in Napoleon's life.

She was born in Martinique and was a very prominent figure in French society. Napoleon met her in 1795 and they were married in 1796. Their marriage was annulled in 1809 and Josephine died in 1814. It's believed that Napoleon's last words were: France, the army and Josephine.

2 Napoleon was a complex figure and many scholars have tried to understand his personality and strategic thinking. You've just read an infographic about him and now you are challenged to put the following pieces of information on Napoleon's life into the correct category. Challenge accepted?

Challenge students to complete the activity individually, without help from the infographic. Afterward, ask students to compare their answers in pairs. Finally, ask students to check their answers, using the infographic if needed.

a) [4] Personality traits
b) [1] Napoleonic code
c) [2] Military achievements
d) [3] Influence in history

1. For the first time in history, principles of equality and liberty were defined as legal rights.
2. Napoleon became a General at a very early age and won many battles, among them Marengo (1800) and Wagram (1809).
3. Napoleonic control over European colonizing countries paved the way for independence movements in Latin America.
4. A great military genius with an ambitious mindset.

Napoleon became world famous for his political and military exploits, but he was also very interested in science. During the Egypt campaign he brought along 150 engineers, scholars and scientists to study the topography and history of Egypt. It was during this campaign that the Rosetta Stone was found.

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Ask students to complete the activity in pairs. Then, correct it orally. Expand the study of compound verbs by giving additional examples or asking students to identify the most common compound verbs that are made with **break**, **take**, **build** and **go**.

3 There are several examples of compound verbs in this infographic. Can you identify a synonym for each of the following bold-type verbs?

a) The French Revolution **breaks out** with the storming of the Bastille prison.
( ) finishes (✓) starts ( ) pauses

b) Napoleon **takes part** in the insurrection in Corsica.
(✓) participates ( ) avoids ( ) begins

c) Napoleon's main ambition was to **build up** enormous personal power.
( ) gather ( ) maintain (✓) forge

d) Napoleon fails to conquer Syria and **goes back** to France, where he gains control through a *coup d'état*.
(✓) returns ( ) ends up ( ) brings back

Compound, or multi-word verbs, are verbal expressions that consist of a verb plus one or more particles or prepositions. It's very important to know some of these verbs in order to speak and fully understand English.

#RESEARCH TIME

Look at the following pictures that show how Napoleon's iconic image has been represented and recreated.

Napoleon's name and image continue to appear in entertainment and culture. Form groups and research one of the following references to him:

- Napoleon – a fictional character in the novel *Animal Farm*
- Napoleon – the board game
- Napoleon – the pastry
- Napoleon complex – psychology
- Napoleon – the fish

Organize students into small groups to carry out the research. Tell them to use different sources of information, such as websites, magazines and books. Tell students to clearly organize the information they collect and use visual tools to present their findings. After the presentations, ask students why some historical characters reach such a high level of popularity. Make students understand that political characters tend to have a huge influence on private and public life if their actions cause major changes in people's lives and thoughts. Napoleon is a good example of this sort of leadership.

Describe your chosen reference and how it relates to the real historical figure. Present your findings using visual tools.

After presenting, go to the section below.

Why have some historical characters reached such an enormous level of popularity and engendered a huge number of cultural references?

Did you know that Napoleon wrote a romance novel? Clisson et Eugénie was written in 1795, when Napoleon was only 26. The novel tells the love story between a young soldier named Clisson and a young lady called Bernadine Eugénie. The book was never published during Napoleon's lifetime and its English version became available only in 2009.

Project to-do list

- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]

#IT'S YOUR TURN

You already know how influential Napoleon was, politically speaking. You have also found out more about how his image still affects modern entertainment and culture.

You are now going to take these references to the next level.

Get into groups and organize a set of virtual icons to present some major facts from Napoleon's life. Use the information you've learned while reading the infographic, or find other sources of information. The most important thing is to translate your knowledge into visual communication. Remember, Napoleon mastered the use of image during his lifetime, so make him proud.

Instructions:

1. Choose four interesting facts from Napoleon's life and create an icon to illustrate each one.
2. Icons are small pictures or symbols that communicate an idea or function. They help people to identify important information more quickly, so choose your colors, shapes and symbols carefully.
3. Produce a printed version of these four icons and challenge the other groups to guess what they represent.

After the presentation of the icons by the whole class, identify which ones were guessed more easily by the classmates and which ones took longer or weren't identified at all, thinking about what made some more straightforward than others.

Project schedule

Who

The objective of this project is to make students build up a visual representation of Napoleon's life.
Tell students to select at least four facts of Napoleon's life and transport each one of them into visual elements.
Organize students in small groups and ask them to read the instructions. Tell them to analyze different sets of icons that are available on image banks in order to collect ideas. Ask them to interview web designers and other visual professionals for tips.
Help students organize their results on a clear

What

presentation. Define a day for the presentations and challenge students to identify the facts illustrated in each icon.

Assessment

While students create their icons and organize their presentation, check their understanding of the instructions and of the information about Napoleon. During the presentation, analyze student's language and use of visual information.

When